

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A confectionery product comprising:

(i) one or more salivation regions comprising a salivation agent in an amount effective to aid in the stimulation of the flow of saliva in an oral cavity and a salivation region confectionery base; and

(ii) one or more oral comfort regions comprising an oral comfort ingredient selected from the group consisting of proteins, lipids, surfactants and mixtures thereof in an amount effective to lubricate, coat or moisten said oral cavity and an oral comfort region confectionery base,

wherein the salivation agent is not uniformly distributed throughout the product but is concentrated in the one or more salivation regions maintained as discrete and separate regions to enhance salivation,

and the oral comfort ingredient is concentrated in the one or more oral comfort regions.

2. (Original) The confectionery product according to claim 1, wherein said salivation region confectionery base and said oral comfort region confectionery base are sugar bases.

3. (Original) The confectionery product according to claim 2, wherein said sugar bases comprises a sugar selected from the group consisting of sucrose, glucose, fructose, maltose, corn syrup and mixtures thereof.

4. (Original) The confectionery product according to claim 1, wherein said salivation region confectionery base and said oral comfort region confectionery base are sugarless bases.

5. (Previously presented) The confectionery product according to claim 4, wherein said sugarless bases are selected from the group consisting of isomalt, erythritol, hydrogenated starch hydrolysates, sorbitol, xylitol, mannitol and mixtures thereof.

6. (Original) A confectionery product according to claim 1, wherein said salivation agent is selected from the group consisting of acidulents, cooling compounds, salts, salt enhancers, monosodium glutamate, monosodium glutamate enhancers, flavors and mixtures thereof.

7. (Original) A confectionery product according to claim 6, wherein said acidulent is selected from the group consisting of citric acid, malic acid, succinic acid, adipic acid and mixtures thereof.

8. (Original) The confectionery product according to claim 1, wherein said salivation agent is present in an amount from about 0.01% to about 4% by weight of the confectionery product.

9. (Cancelled).

10. (Currently amended) The confectionery product according to claim ~~9~~ 1, wherein said oral comfort ingredient is a lipid.

11. (Original) A confectionery product according to claim 10, wherein said lipid is present in an amount of about 1 to about 20% by weight of the confectionery product.

12. (Original) The confectionery product according to claim 10, wherein said lipid is selected from the group consisting of partially hydrogenated palm kernel oil, medium chain triglycerides, coconut oil, anhydrous milk fat, cocoa butter, corn oil, palm oil, soybean oil, sunflower oil, canola oil and mixtures thereof.

13. (Original) The confectionery product according to claim 10, wherein said oral comfort region further comprises a surfactant selected from the group consisting of nonionic surfactants, anionic surfactants and amphoteric surfactants.

14. (Original) The confectionery product according to claim 13, wherein said surfactant is present in an amount of about 0.5 percent to about 4 percent by weight of said oral comfort region.

15. (Original) The confectionery product according to claim 1, wherein said salivation region comprises an acidulent and a cooling compound.

16. (Original) The confectionery product according to claim 15, wherein said cooling compound is present in an amount of about 0.01 to 0.2 % by weight of the confectionery product.

17. (Currently amended) A method of preparing a confectionery product having a salivation region and oral comfort region that is separate and distinct from said salivation region, said method comprising the steps of:

(i) mixing a salivation region with a salivation region confectionery base to form a salivation agent containing confectionery base;

(ii) mixing an oral comfort ingredient selected from the group consisting of lipids, proteins, surfactants and mixtures thereof with a oral comfort region confectionery base to form a oral comfort ingredient containing confectionery base; and

(iii) forming said confectionery product with said salivation agent containing confectionery base and said oral comfort ingredient containing confectionery

base in a manner that maintains said salivation agent containing confectionery base and said oral comfort ingredient containing confectionery base in separate and distinct regions of said confectionery product.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein said step of forming comprises substantially simultaneously depositing said salivation agent containing confectionery base and said oral comfort ingredient containing confectionery base in separate and distinct regions of a confectionery mold.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 18, wherein said confectionery mold has a raised ridge running along its bottom inner surface that defines said separate and distinct regions of said confectionery mold.

20. (Original) A method for treating xerostomia, which comprises:
introducing into the oral cavity a confectionery product containing a confectionery base, a salivation agent concentrated in one region of said product, and an oral comfort ingredient concentrated in a separate region of said product.

21. (Original) A method according to claim 20, wherein said salivation agent is an acidulent in combination with a cooling compound.

22. (Previously presented) The confectionery product of claim 1, consisting essentially of one salivation region and one oral comfort region.

23. (Previously presented) A confectionery product comprising:

(i) one or more salivation regions comprising a salivation agent selected from the group consisting of acidulents, cooling compounds, salts, salt enhancers, monosodium glutamate, monosodium glutamate enhancers, flavors and mixtures thereof in an amount effective to aid in the stimulation of the flow of saliva in an oral cavity and a salivation region confectionery base; and

(ii) one or more oral comfort regions comprising an oral comfort ingredient selected from the group consisting of lipids, proteins, surfactants and mixtures thereof in an amount effective to lubricate, coat or moisten said oral cavity and an oral comfort region confectionery base,

wherein the salivation agent is not uniformly distributed throughout the product but is concentrated in the one or more salivation regions maintained as discrete and separate regions to enhance salivation,

and the oral comfort ingredient is concentrated in the one or more oral comfort regions.

24. (Currently amended) A confectionery product comprising:

(i) one or more salivation regions comprising a salivation agent in an amount effective to aid in the stimulation of the flow of saliva in an oral cavity and a salivation region confectionery base; and

(ii) one or more oral comfort regions comprising an oral comfort ingredient selected from the group consisting of lipids, proteins and surfactants in an amount effective to lubricate, coat or moisten said oral cavity and an oral comfort region confectionery base,

wherein the salivation agent is not uniformly distributed throughout the product but is concentrated in the one or more salivation regions to cause movement of the product in the oral cavity,

and the oral comfort ingredient is concentrated in the one or more oral comfort regions.